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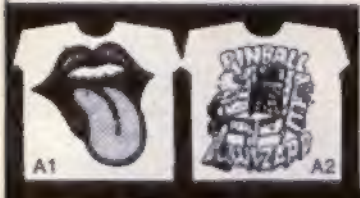

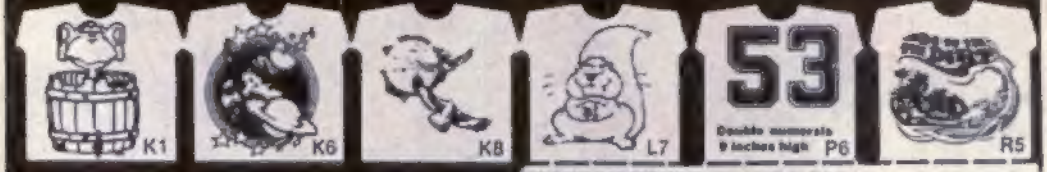

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DISTRESS
EDITOR: G. WILDMAN • WRITER: P. KUPPERBERG • ARTIST: M. ZECK
FOR THREE DAYS HE HAD BEEN RIDING THROUGH THE DESERT.... RETURNING FROM A BATTLE ALREADY FORGOTTEN / IT HAD BEEN A LONG, HARD BATTLE ....BUT NOW HE HAS FINALLY REACHED A TOWN.... FILLED WITH FEAR /
THE EMOTION ENGULFS HIM BUT HE DOES NOT TURN AND RUN/ A PITY.... THAT MIGHT HAVE SAVED HIS LIFE /
THE VILLAGERS FEARED HIM....YET HE HAD DONE NOTHING TO THEM/ HE FOUND IT QUITE STRANGE/
HIS TREK ACROSS THE DESERT HAD BEEN LONG AND DRY AND HE WAS IN GREAT NEED OF REFRESHMENTS/
INN
D-7246
THE INN GREW QUIET AS HE ENTERED/ HE FOUND IT STRANGE THAT THE TOWNSPEOPLE WERE FRIGHTENED OF HIM/ BUT, HE DECIDED TO PONDER THAT AFTER HIS THIRST HAD BEEN QUENCHED/
INNKEEPER/ A TANKARD OF ALE/
SCARY TALES

SCARY TALES Vol. 1, No. 3, December, 1975.
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THE COOL ALE REFRESHES THE WEARY BARBARIAN WHO WISHES FOR NOTHING MORE THAN REST AND QUIET!
HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THAT HIS PEACE IS NOT THIS DAY FORTHCOMING!
MAY I SPEAK TO YOU, WARRIOR?
AYE, BE SEATED, OLD MAN!
HE NOTICED SOMETHING IN THE EYES OF THE OLD MAN... THERE WAS A SPARKLE THAT THE OTHER VILLAGERS LACKED! IT WAS, HE KNEW, A LOOK OF DEFIANCE!
IT SURPRISES ME, OLD MAN, THAT ANYONE IN THIS VILLAGE WOULD SPEAK TO ME! WHY IS IT THAT THEY FEAR ME?
AH, IT IS A FEARSOME TALE, WARRIOR, A TERRIBLE STORY INDEED!
DID YOU SEE THE CASTLE ATOP THE MOUNTAIN...
AYE, I SAW THE CASTLE!
IT IS THE LAIR OF A WIZARD... A MOST FOUL AND EVIL SORCERER WHO SENDS DOWN DEMONS AND DEVILS TO DESTROY US AND OUR CROPS!
WE ARE MERELY POOR FARMERS WHO WISH TO DO NOTHING BUT TEND OUR LAND AND LIVE PEACEFUL LIVES! BUT THE EVIL WIZARD WILL NOT LEAVE US IN PEACE... HE USES US FOR HIS OWN PERVERTED GAMES!
BUT THE FOULEST DEED WAS THE ABDUCTION OF MY YOUNG DAUGHTER BY HIS DEMONS! EVEN AS I WATCHED IN HORROR THEY SWOOPED DOWN FROM THE SKY AND STOLE HER FROM THE MARKETPLACE!

THE PEOPLE OF THIS VILLAGE THINK YOU TO BE AN EMISSARY OF THE WIZARD! THAT IS WHY THEY FEAR YOU! BUT I THINK NOT! I SHALL PAY YOU THIS SACK OF GOLD IF YOU RESCUE MY DAUGHTER!
HMM...RISK MY LIFE AGAINST AN EVIL WIZARD FOR MERE GOLD....?

"...WELL," REPLIED THE OLD MAN, "I'M SURE MY BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER WOULD BE QUITE, SHALL WE SAY, GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HEROIC DEED...."

AH, WHAT I DO IN THE NAME OF CHIVALRY!

THROUGHOUT THE LONG, COOL MORNING AND FAR INTO THE BLAZING HEAT OF THE AFTERNOON, THE YOUNG WARRIOR CLIMBS THE CRAGGY MOUNTAINSIDE! THEN, TOWARDS THE TWILIGHT, FLYING FROM OUT OF THE SETTING SUN, COMES....
....A DEMON!
BY THE GODS! I'VE NOT COME THIS FAR TO BE STOPPED BY SOME HELLSPAWNED MADNESS!

AH-AH! SO YOU CAN BE HURT, HELL-CHILD!
SKREE

HIS SWORD REFLECTS THE LAST RAYS OF THE DYING SUN AS HE TURNS TO FACE HIS SECOND ANTAGONIST....
AGH!
I'LL SEND YOU TO JOIN YOUR BROTHER, MONSTER!

HE FEELS THE PAIN THROUGH HIS ARM AS HE CLINGS DESPERATELY TO THE UNEVEN MOUNTAINSIDE... THE WEIGHT OF THE DEMON THREATENING TO TEAR HIM AWAY!
GODS! YOU'LL... DIE YET... BEAST!
IN MOMENTS THAT SEEM TO EARN TO BE ETERNITIES, THE STRUGGLE IS OVER, AND THE DEMON FALLS TO THE DISTANT EARTH....ITS SEMI-LIFE ENDED!
MY SWORD! DAMN THAT MONSTER...AND HIS VILE MASTER! THIS DEED HAS THUS FAR COST ME MY SWORD... AND MAYBE MY LIFE!
THE REST OF HIS CLIMB IS WITHOUT INCIDENT AND HE REACHES THE SUMMIT LATE INTO THE NIGHT, AND....
... DAWN FINDS HIM AT THE CASTLE OF THE EVIL SORCERER!
AND HE WONDERS WHY HE WAS ABLE TO GET AS FAR AS HE HAS ... ALIVE! BUT THAT IS A QUESTION BEST LEFT UNANSWERED TILL THERE IS PROPER TIME TO PONDER IT!
THERE SEEMS TO BE NO ONE HOME...
ONCE INSIDE, HOWEVER, HE FINDS...
LORD! I SEEMED TO HAVE SPOKEN TOO SOON!
GRRRR
WELL, DEMON, IF IT'S A FIGHT YOU DESIRE....
...THEN IT IS A FIGHT YOU SHALL GET!
RRRAARRR
4
CONTINUED AFTER FOLLOWING PAGE

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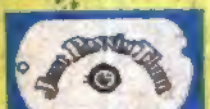
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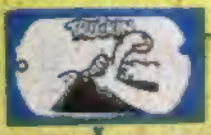
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THE BATTLE IS A BRIEF ONE, AS ...
YOU CREATURES OF...
EEEEEEE
A SCREAM... THE OLD MAN'S DAUGHTER!
CHK
AAAIIEE
THE SCREAM CAME FROM JUST THIS WAY! AH, I CAN FEEL THE GOLD BETWEEN MY FINGERS NOW!
WITHIN MOMENTS...
I THINK NOT, FOOLISH BARBARIAN
QUICK GIRL, WE MUST FLEE THIS PLACE BEFORE...
MAKE SENSE, GIRL! WE MUST FLEE!
EVEN AS HE SPEAKS, THE YOUNG WARRIOR FEELS HIS BODY STIFFEN AND FREEZE AS A MAGICAL FORCE ENGULFS HIM!
WHAT GOES ON HERE!?!
IT SEEMS PLAIN TO ME, OAF! BUT, FIRST I'M SURE THAT YOU RECOGNIZE ME!
WITH A SWEEP OF HIS HAND, THE WIZARD REMOVED HIS COWL, REVEALING HIS IDENTITY TO THE HELPLESS WARRIOR!
YOU...THE OLD MAN FROM THE TAVERN!
, AYE, BARBARIAN! BUT, DID I NOT TELL YOU THAT I PLAYED GAMES WITH THOSE OF THE VILLAGE BELOW? WHY THEN, SHOULD I NOT EXTEND MY GAMES TO OUTSIDERS? THAT IS WHY I ALLOWED YOU TO REACH HERE ALIVE!
BUT...FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
IT'S QUITE SIMPLE, REALLY! MY DAUGHTER NEEDS TO BE FED... IT IS MERELY MORE FUN... TO DO IT THIS WAY, FOR ...
.... YOU SEE, BARBARIAN, MY DAUGHTER IS A VAMPIRE!
END

SATAN WEEPS
IF YOU VISITED GREENWOOD JUST A YEAR AGO, YOU'D HAVE FOUND A CHARMING, PEACEFUL LITTLE TOWN... AN ISLAND OF TRANQUILITY IN THE SEA OF CHAOS THAT HAS FLOODED OUR CITIES AND MANY SMALLER COMMUNITIES! EVEN THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GREENWOOD WERE MANNERLY, WELL-BEHAVED KIDS... THEY DIDN'T RIP OFF STORES, STEAL CARS, OR DO DRUGS ... THEY HAD SPORTS, DANCES AND NICE NORMAL THINGS.
WHEN ARNOLD PRINTZ ARRIVED IN GREEN WOOD, HE FOUND IT TOTALLY AND UNBEARABLY BORING!
THERE'S ARNOLD PRINTZ. HE'S IN MY SCIENCE CLASS ... WHAT A WEIRDO!
SSSHHH! IT ISN'T FAIR TO PUT HIM DOWN LIKE THAT, DENNIS!
DENNIS HOLCOMB IS NUMBER ONE ON MY LIST... AS SOON AS I FINISH THE ROOM OF WORSHIP, I'LL FIX HIM!
D 7041
HIS PARENTS, R. H. PRINTZ AND WIFE, GAVE ARNOLD A LOT OF FREEDOM. IF HE HAD STRANGE HOBBIES THEY WERE TOLERANT...
PLAY NICE, ARNOLD. WE'RE GOING TO THE MOVIES.
MORE MUMBO-JUMBO, ARNIE? WELL, DO YOUR THING!
1

ARNOLD HAD READ BOOKS ON WITCH-CRAFT... HE'D PRACTICED VOODOO... AND NOW, HE WENT TO WORK ON DENNIS HOLCOMB!
HAVE TO DO THIS EXACTLY RIGHT...

I CALL UPON YOU, ANGRA MAINYU... I HAVE DELIVERED UNTO YOU MY SOUL... WE HAVE A PACT... AND I INVOKE YOUR POWERS AGAINST MY ENEMIES!

PUNISH HOLCOMB! CAUSE HIM GREAT PAIN! I WISH TO HAVE HIM IN MY POWER.

UK GALA SHAINTAN, SON OF AHRIMAN, BLOIG MAKKL HOLCOMB!

AT THAT MOMENT, AT THE FOOTBALL FIELD, DENNIS HOLCOMB WAS PRACTICING FOOTBALL WHEN...

AAAHHH!
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HOLCOMB!

HOLCOMB'S DOCTOR COULDN'T TELL! X-RAYS SHOWED NOTHING...
IT'S LIKE A KNIFE IN MY SIDE, DOCTOR.
THERE'S NO MEDICAL EXPLANATION, DENNIS. STOP PLAYING FOOTBALL UNTIL IT'S BETTER.
HOLCOMB SHOULD LISTEN TO REASON NOW.
GATER
IT HURTS, DOESN'T IT, HOLCOMB? I CAN MAKE THE PAIN GO AWAY.
GET AWAY FROM ME YOU LITTLE CREEP!
LISTEN TO HIM, DENNIS!
YOU AND DOT COME TO MY PARENTS' HOME TONIGHT AT NINE. BRING DOROTY... AND TWO OR THREE OTHERS. YOU'LL HAVE A VERY INTERESTING EVENING.
TONIGHT, PRINCE OF DARKNESS... I WILL BRING YOU NEW SUBJECTS!
3

BUT NINE THAT NIGHT... ARNOLD ASKED HIS PARENTS TO ATTEND A LATE MOVIE WHEN THE KIDS ARRIVED.
COME ON IN. HOW DO YOU FEEL, DENNIS?
THE PAIN IS WORSE THAN EVER!
IT IS NECESSARY TO APPROACH THE ALTAR OF EVIL UNSHOD. COME ON KIDS, HUMOR ME.
ONLY SO FAR, ARNOLD!
WE PLEDGE OURSELVES TO YOUR SERVICE, SHAITAN, PRINCE OF DARKNESS!
HOLD IT, PRINTZ... I DON'T PLEDGE ANYTHING IN HERE!
YOU WANT THE PAIN TO STOP, DON'T YOU, HOLCOMB?
YES, BUT, YOU CAN'T...
THERE! IS THE PAIN GONE OR ISN'T IT?
HEY, IT... WAIT A MINUTE! DID YOU PUT SOME KIND OF SPELL ON ME?

I OUGHT TO REALLY MESS YOU UP, CREEP!
YOU'D BETTER NOT TOUCH ME, HOLCOMB, I WARN YOU!
WATCH OUT!
CRAASH
I OUGHT TO RAP YOU IN THE MOUTH! COME ON, GANG... THIS IS A BAD SCENE!
COME AROUND SOMETIME YOU FEEL LIKE DOING SOMETHING NORMAL, PRINTZ!
M-MY STATUE!
I GUESS DAD IS RIGHT.. I THINK I'LL JOIN THE SCIENCE CLUB... THIS SATANIC STUFF IS FOR THE BIRDS!
END

SEE BEHIND GLASSES
GOLF BALL
MONSTER
7 FEET TALL
PEDOMETER
SECRET BOOK SAFE
SKIN HEAD WIG
Weighted Wristlets
"SPUD" GUN
KARATE
FREE MOVE CHARTER CHART
TRICK BASEBALL
FOAMING SUGAR
ONION GUM
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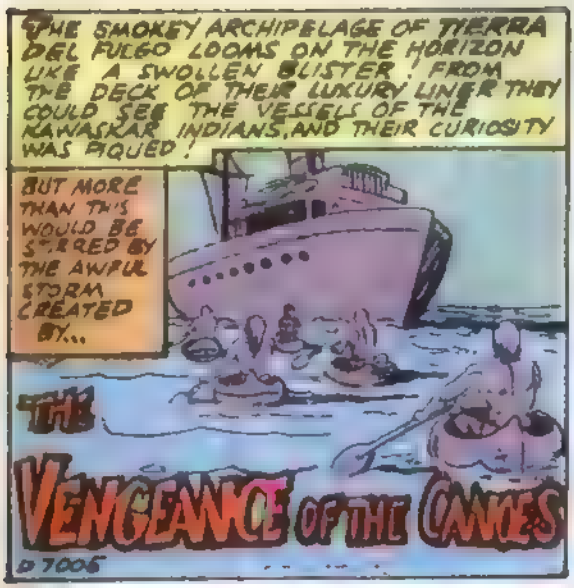
THE SMOKEY ARCHIPELAGE OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO LOOMS ON THE HORIZON LIKE A SWOLLEN BLISTER! FROM THE DECK OF THEIR LUXURY LINER THEY COULD SEE THE VESSELS OF THE KAWASKAR INDIANS, AND THEIR CURIOSITY WAS PIQUED!
BUT MORE THAN THIS WOULD BE STIRRED BY THE AWFUL STORM CREATED BY...
THE VENGEANCE OF THE CANOES
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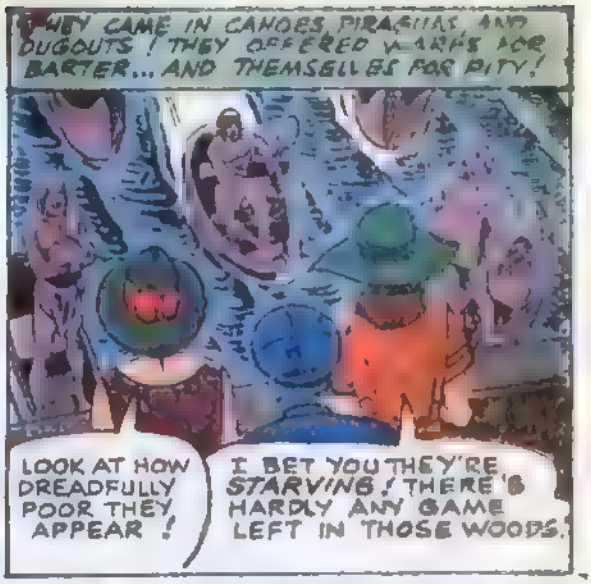
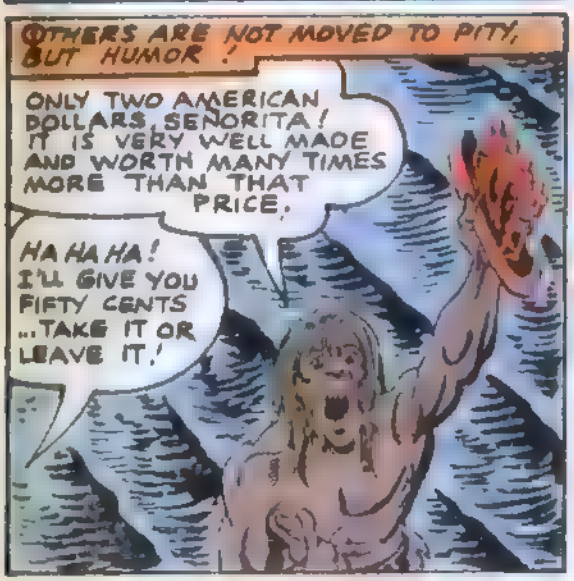
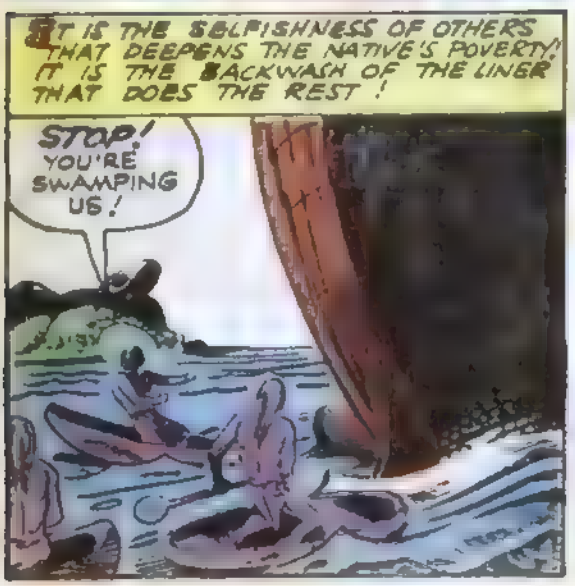
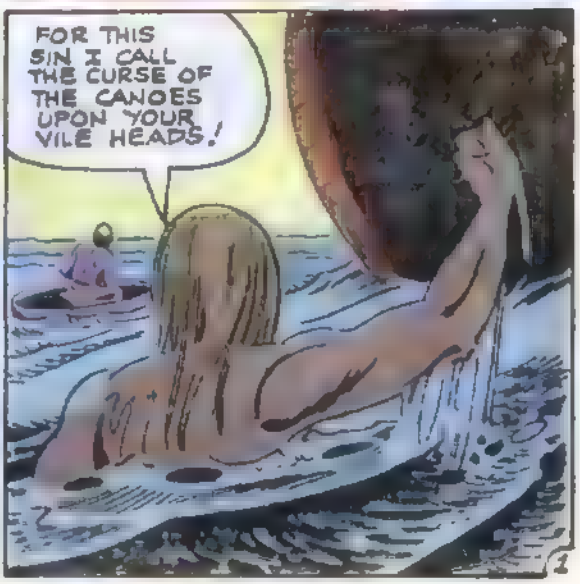

THEY CAME IN CANOES, PIRAGUAS, AND DUGOUTS! THEY OFFERED WARES FOR BARTER... AND THEMSELVES FOR PITY!
LOOK AT HOW DREADFULLY POOR THEY APPEAR!
I BET YOU THEY'RE STARVING! THERE'S HARDLY ANY GAME LEFT IN THOSE WOODS.

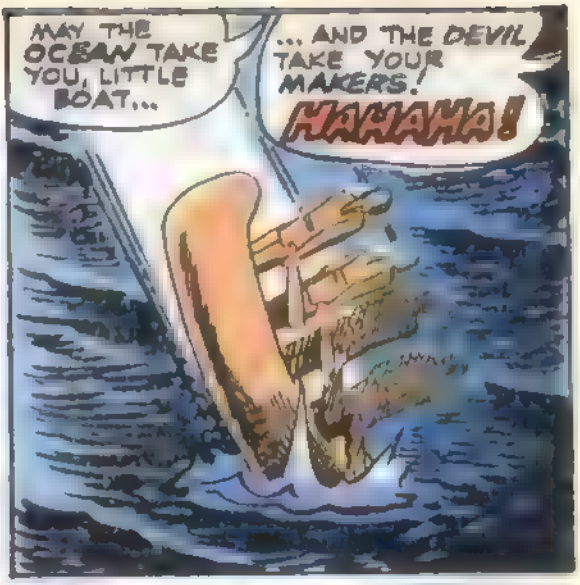

OTHERS ARE NOT MOVED TO PITY, BUT HUMOR!
ONLY TWO AMERICAN DOLLARS, SENORITA! IT IS VERY WELL MADE AND WORTH MANY TIMES MORE THAN THAT PRICE.
HA HA HA! I'LL GIVE YOU FIFTY CENTS ...TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT!

I'LL TAKE IT! WITH A HUNGRY FAMILY TO FEED I CANNOT AFFORD TO REFUSE ANY AMOUNT.
HA HA! YOU'LL NEVER MAKE A GOOD SALESMAN! NO WONDER! YOU'RE SO POOR!


IT IS THE SELFISHNESS OF OTHERS THAT DEEPENS THE NATIVE'S POVERTY! IT IS THE BACKWASH OF THE LINER THAT DOES THE REST!
STOP! YOU'RE SWAMPING US!

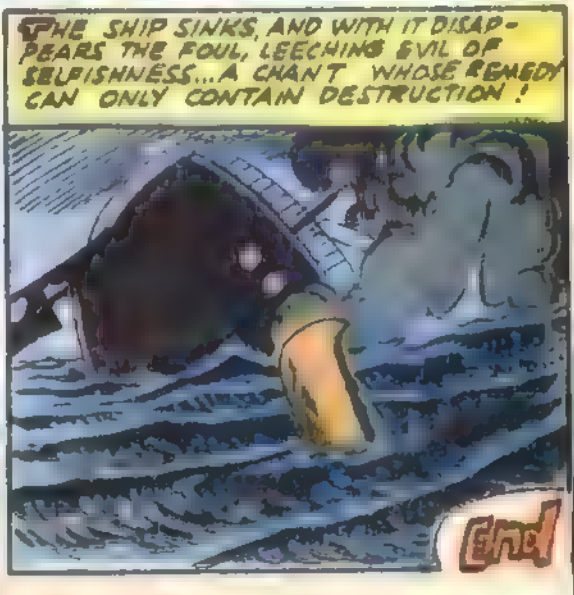

FOR THIS SIN I CALL THE CURSE OF THE CANOES UPON YOUR VILE HEADS!
1

THAT JUST WOULDN'T FIT WITH THE DECOR OF A PENTHOUSE BACK IN NEW YORK


MAY THE OCEAN TAKE YOU, LITTLE BOAT...
... AND THE DEVIL TAKE YOUR MAKERS!
HAHAHA!

AND THE OCEAN, WATERS OF LIFE, WORKED ITS MAGIC ON THE TINY CANOE.

VENGEANCE IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY AS DEATH TAKES A HAND IN THE STAGING!
MY GOD! WHERE DID THEY COME FROM. THEY'RE NOT FROM THE...
AIIIEEE!


THE SHIP SINKS, AND WITH IT DISAPPEARS THE FOUL, LEECHING EVIL OF SELFISHNESS... A CHANT WHOSE REMEDY CAN ONLY CONTAIN DESTRUCTION!
End

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CITY

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HOUSE FOR SALE

The FOR SALE sign with GEO. RAND AGENCY on it had been stuck in the front lawn so long, the paint was weathered and fading. Behind it, the big old-fashioned framed house loomed dark and menacing. It had not been painted in years and the original gray was disappearing.

Harold Boland looked at the forbidding abandoned-looking structure and he sighed. His future in the real estate business hinged on whether or not he could unload this monstrosity on some stupid customer.

"It's supposed to be haunted," Harold said aloud even though no one was with him. He'd fallen into this habit ever since Mr. Rand had called him in, pointed out his poor sales record, and then finished with a warning.

"Prove you're a real estate salesman, Harold," the old man had said. "Find a buyer for the Lockridge mansion."

Remembering, Harold said aloud "Mansion! Hah!"

He was standing on the weed-grown walk leading to the frowning front door. Did he imagine it or was there a rustling in the bushes on this windless day? Harold felt goose bumps spring to life as he started toward that front door. He had the key to the house. That morning, he had decided to make a determined effort to sell the place.

"The trouble is, people hear rumors that it's haunted," he mumbled, pulling out the big, old-fashioned key to the front door. He was stooping to insert the key when the door creaked slowly inward. It

wasn't locked. "I was here two days ago, and I distinctly remember locking that door!"

Inside, he looked around. It smelled dusty and mildewed but the door was still on his mind.

"I'm the only one with a key to the lock," he ruminated aloud. Did he imagine it or was there a faint giggle from somewhere off in the shadows?

"I imagined it!" he said quite firmly, determined not to let his nerves get the better of him on this visit. Last time he'd been here, he'd heard creaking boards, a door slam, and murmuring voices. He'd left that time in a panic, using every ounce of courage to linger long enough to lock the door.

The house was quiet once more. He looked around. Spacious, large rooms. Solidly built walls and floors. It had once been a beautiful place to live, but tragedy had blighted the lives of the Lockridge family. Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Lockridge had perished in an accident and Ellen's fiance had drowned while fishing. All that had happened fifty years before.

The house had been occupied twice in the half-century since. Both times, the families had loved the place; but in each case they had fled in terror, driven forth by ghosts they swore had smashed vases, thrown furniture through windows, and screamed in the middle of the night.

Now, the house, easily worth $65,000 if untainted by terror tales, was for sale for $25,000. It was the bargain of the century, Harold knew.

"I'd buy it myself if I wanted a house," Harold said aloud. His words echoed through the empty rooms, and there was a long silence as though he had been heard and his decision was being considered.

He went upstairs. The bedrooms were spacious, the wide windows looked out on lawns and shrubs that could easily be tended. Harold looked and sighed. "The place doesn't look inviting."

Why don't you do something about it? He seemed to hear the words in an inner ear. Or perhaps it had been a breathed whisper in his ear. At any rate, the idea had been planted. Harold went to Mr. Rand an hour later with a proposal.

"I've got $600 saved, Mr Rand. I'll give you $300 for an option to buy, good for thirty days. I intend to use the other $300 to fix up the place."

Rand smiled at him. "Very well, Harold. Your job expires with the option if you haven't done anything with the house."

Harold brought a lawn mower, pruning tools, and other tools to the house. He mowed grass, pruned

bushes, raked, and got the garden in order. Then, he went to work painting the house.

The whole thing puzzled him. Only gradually, did he become aware he was getting help. He'd leave half a wall painted as darkness fell; and when he returned a day later, that wall would be finished and another one done as well. In two weeks, the house sparkled, lovely and white behind well tended lawns. He replaced the FOR SALE sign with a new one, and customers began dropping in.

But Harold discouraged them. He liked the house.

"If I had the money, I'd buy it!" he said aloud after the painting was finished. "I'm going to sleep here tonight. I don't believe it is haunted."

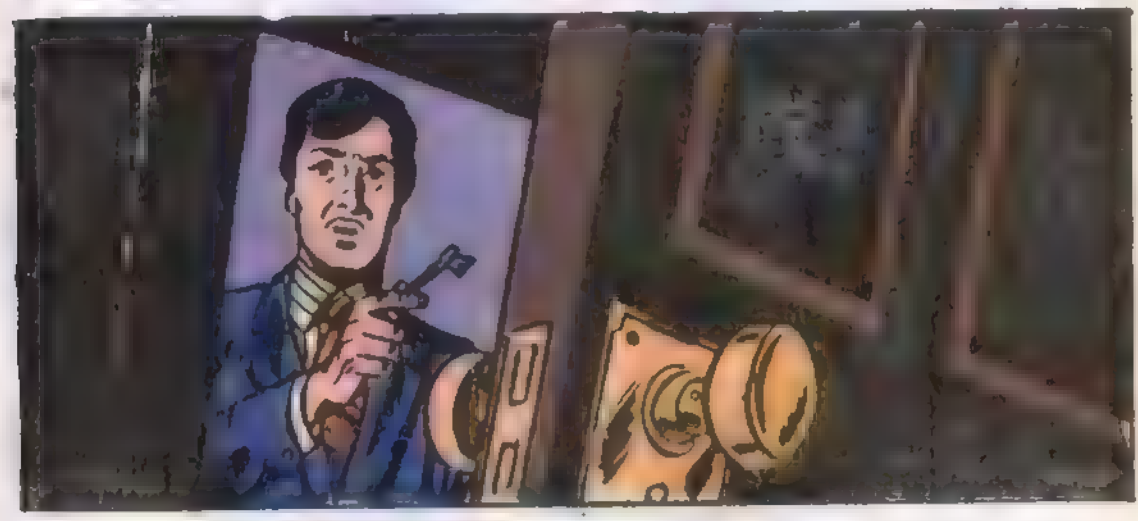
He slept there. And he dreamed of a beautiful girl who he knew to be Ellen Lockridge. No ghosts disturbed him. In the morning, he was getting ready to leave when the ancient doorbell rang.

A young lady stood there and it was the girl of his dreams.

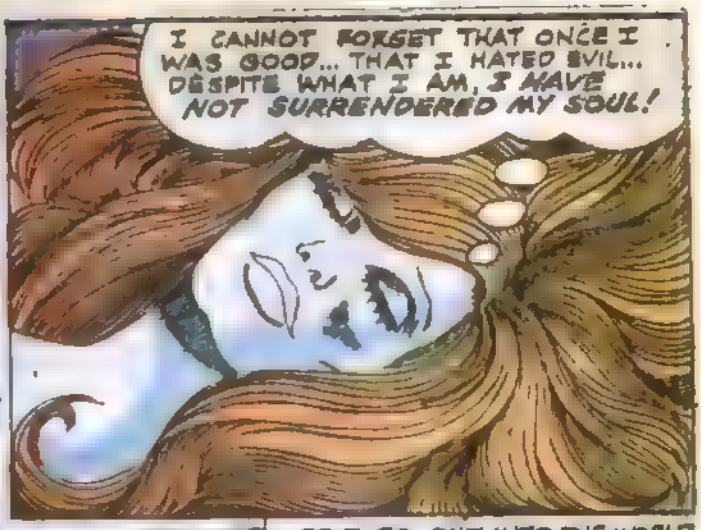
"Harold Boland? I'm from the law firm of Critz & Shluppe. You have inherited $35,000 from a distant relative in Australia," she said, looking around. "What a lovely house. Is it yours?"

Harold smiled. "It will be as soon as I can close the deal. Your name is Ellen, isn't it?"

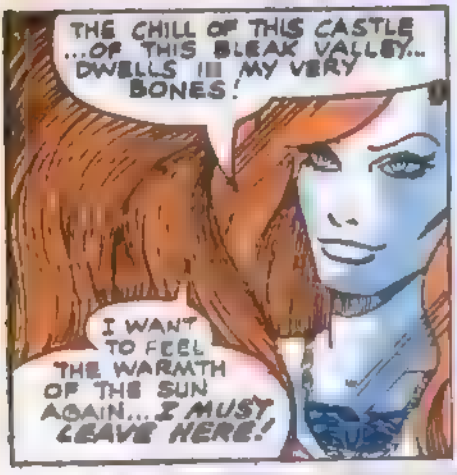
It was, naturally. And they were married, of course. And they lived happily ever after, without a doubt.

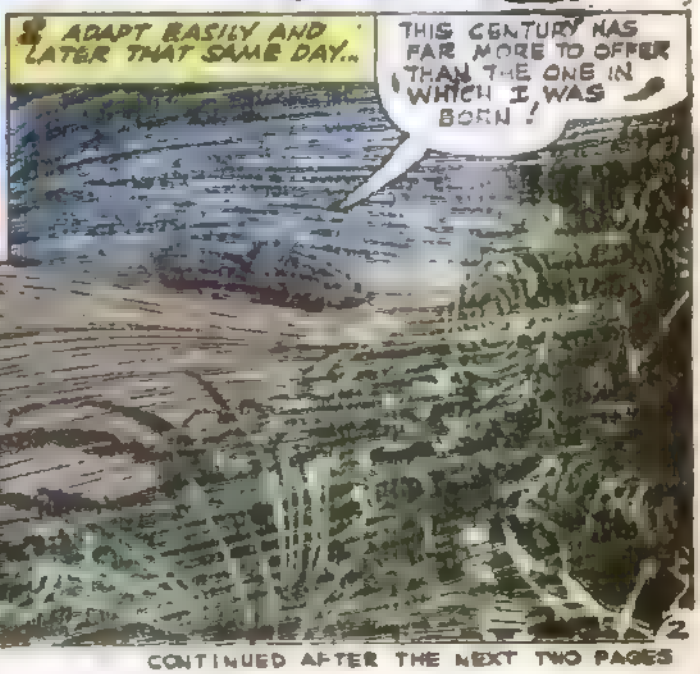


THE CARD OF DEATH
WHEN I LURED COUNT VON BLOOD TO MY BEDSIDE FIVE CENTURIES AGO, I THOUGHT TO PURCHASE LIFE... I RECEIVED INSTEAD, EXISTENCE IN A VALLEY WHERE NO LIFE EXISTS.
I AM LONELY ... AND I MUST FIND VICTIMS BUT...
...AS A VAMPIRE, I AM A FAILURE!
THE OCCASIONAL TRAVELER WHO STRAYED ACROSS MY PATH DID NOT DESERVE THE HIDEOUS DEATH CREATURES SUCH AS I MUST INFLICT TO GO ON EXISTING...
SPARE ME, WOMAN ... IF NOT FOR MY SAKE, THEN FOR THOSE WHO LOVE ME!
HE DOES NOT DESERVE DEATH AT MY HANDS... I CANNOT DO IT!



ONCE MORE, THIRST UNQUENCHED, I RETURNED TO THE CRUMBLING RUIN WHERE I HAD BEEN EXILED FOR FIVE HUNDRED YEARS... TO THE LONELY DUNGEON I NOW CALLED HOME!


THE CHILL OF THIS CASTLE ...OF THIS BLEAK VALLEY... DWELLS IN MY VERY BONES!
I WANT TO FEEL THE WARMTH OF THE SUN AGAIN... I MUST LEAVE HERE!



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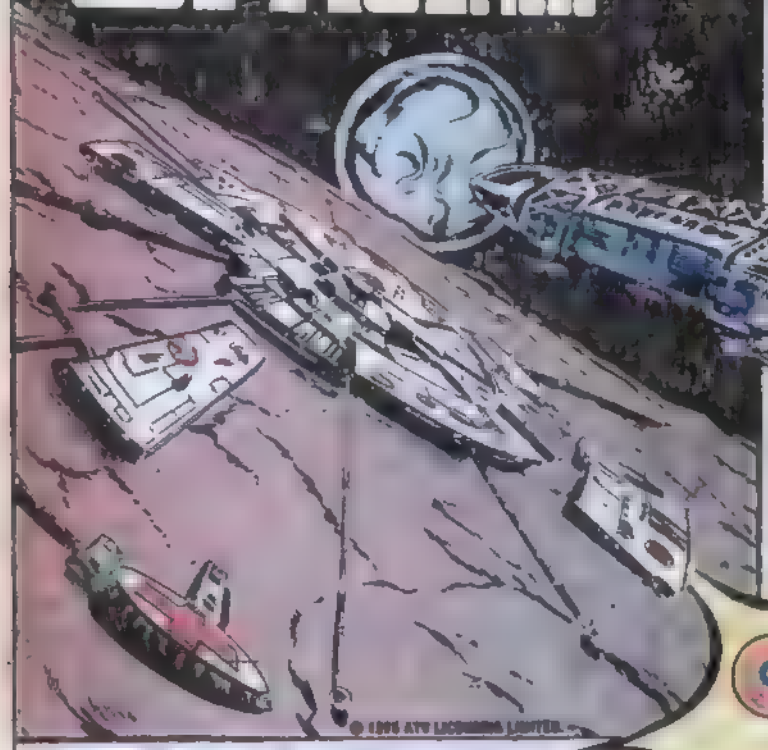

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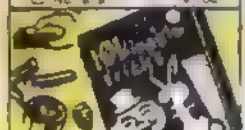

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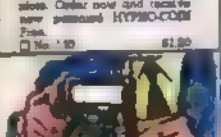

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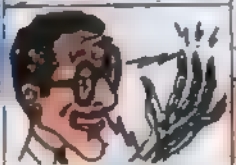

X-RAY SPECS. Look at a coin of the realm & see what's in the lady's purse. Look at a bill & see the bones of the hand that holds it. Looks like ordinary spectacles, but you can see through your hand. Amazing!
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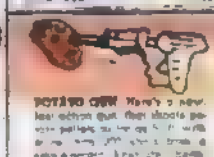

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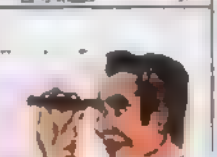

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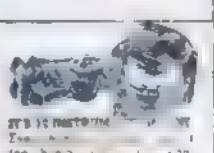
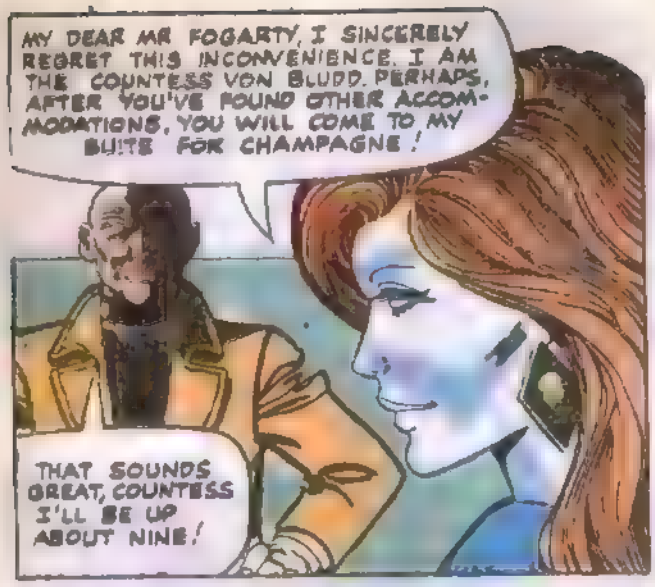
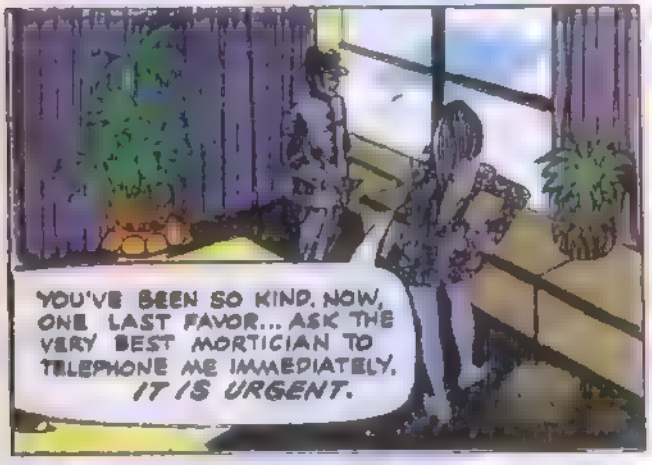


IT'S IS INSTANT. [illegible] Turn [illegible] into [illegible] Just [illegible] Your [illegible] the [illegible] who [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

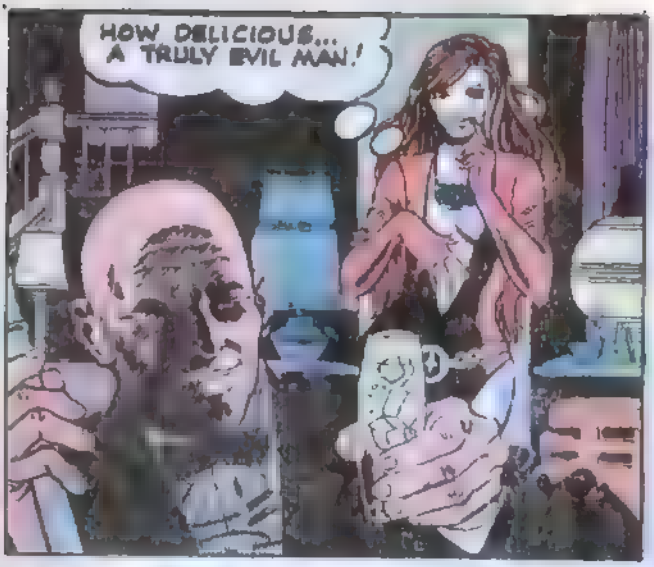
ONCE I LEFT THE VALLEY OF THE DEAD, I SAW RED-BLOODED PEOPLE EVERYWHERE... A VERITABLE WALKING MENU, SMILING, UNAWARE OF THE VAMPIRESS IN THEIR MIDST!
THAT FELLOW LOOKS MEAN. PERHAPS HE...
HE'S A GENTLE MAN, FULL OF LOVE. I COULD NEVER HARM HIM!
THIS IS WHERE THE WORLD'S WEALTHIEST PEOPLE GATHER... IT SHOULD BE THE PERFECT PLACE FOR A VACATION!
I HAVE RESERVED A ROYAL SUITE, GARCON. I AM THE COUNTESS VON BLUDD.
A COUNTESS.
AND THAT GENTLEMAN IS...?
I SAID I WANT THE PENTHOUSE SUITE! NOW, GET IT... OR ELSE!
GOLDEN GUS FOGARTY, EXCELLENCY! HE INSISTS ON USING YOUR SUITE!
3

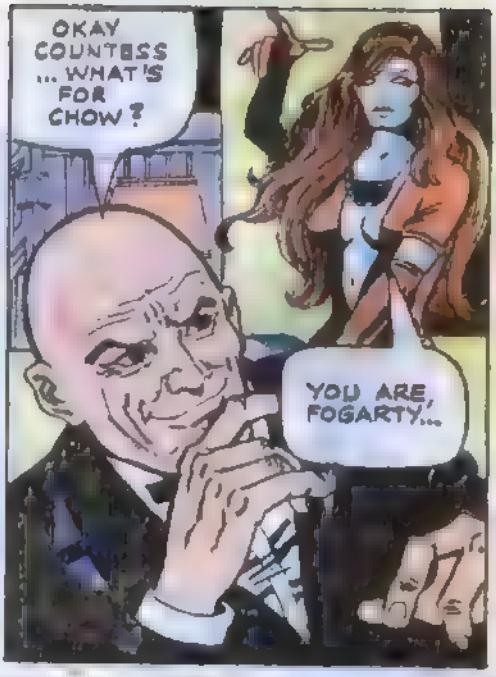

MY DEAR MR. FOGARTY, I SINCERELY REGRET THIS INCONVENIENCE. I AM THE COUNTESS VON BLUDD. PERHAPS, AFTER YOU'VE FOUND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS, YOU WILL COME TO MY SUITE FOR CHAMPAGNE!
THAT SOUNDS GREAT, COUNTESS I'LL BE UP ABOUT NINE!

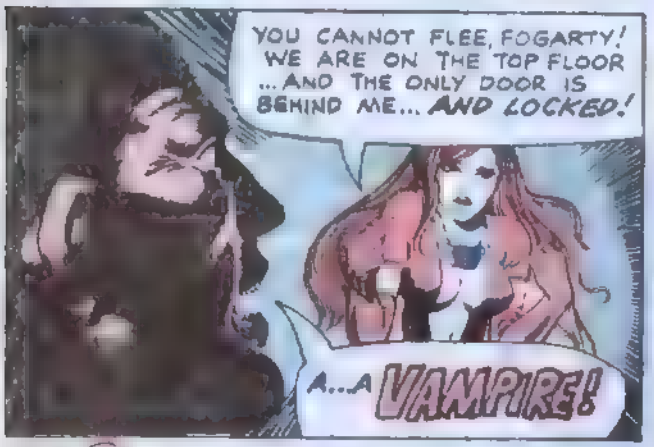


AN HOUR LATER, I HAD COMPLETED THE ARRANGEMENTS...

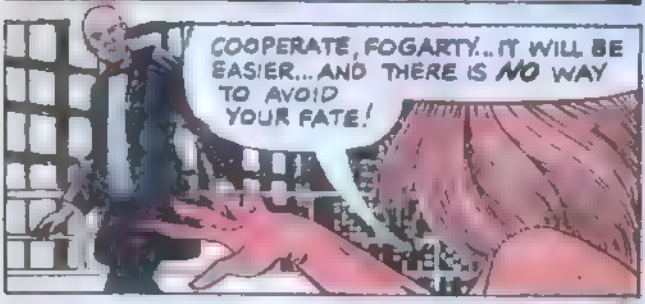
THEN, MY GUEST ARRIVED EVIL EMANATED FROM HIS PORES AND HUNG ABOUT HIM .. A NOXIOUS CLOUD INVISIBLE TO HUMAN EYES.

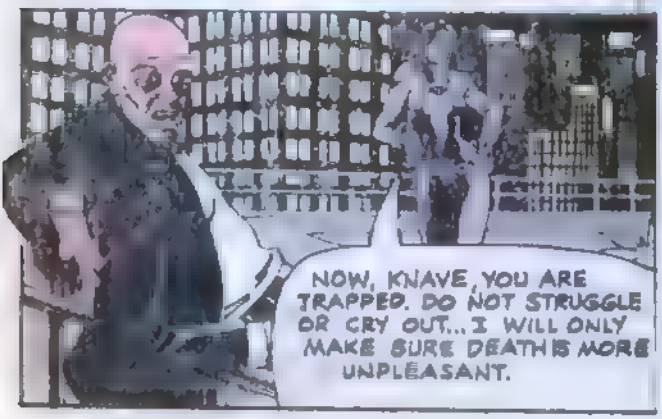

HOW DELICIOUS... A TRULY EVIL MAN!


OKAY COUNTESS ... WHAT'S FOR CHOW?
YOU ARE, FOGARTY...

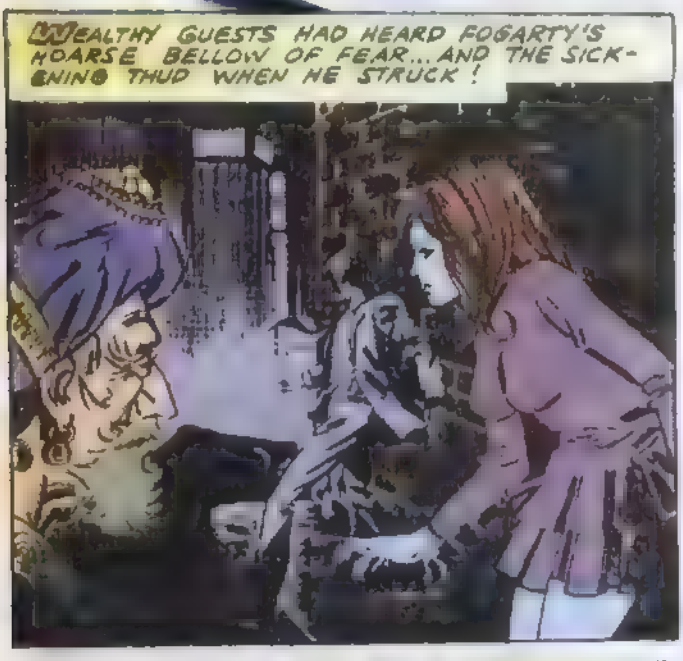

YOU CANNOT FLEE, FOGARTY! WE ARE ON THE TOP FLOOR ...AND THE ONLY DOOR IS BEHIND ME... AND LOCKED!
A...A VAMPIRE!

THE FOOL!

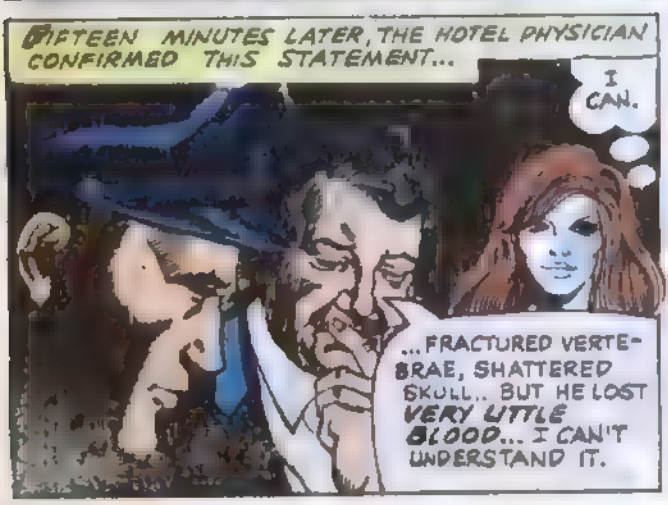

COOPERATE, FOGARTY... IT WILL BE EASIER... AND THERE IS NO WAY TO AVOID YOUR FATE!

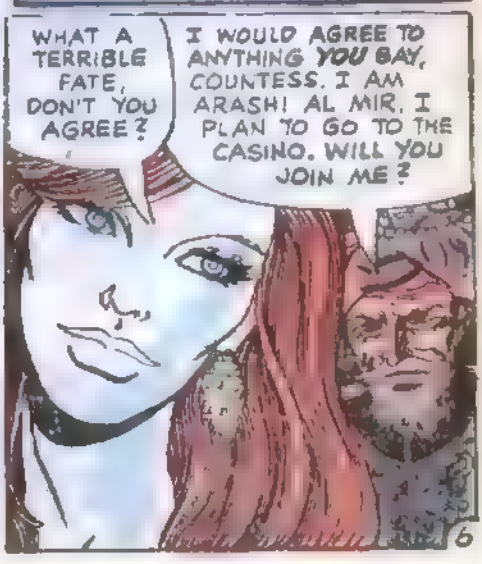

NOW, KNAVE, YOU ARE TRAPPED. DO NOT STRUGGLE OR CRY OUT... I WILL ONLY MAKE SURE DEATH IS MORE UNPLEASANT.

SQUEEK
SQUEEK


WEALTHY GUESTS HAD HEARD FOGARTY'S HOARSE BELLOW OF FEAR... AND THE SICKENING THUD WHEN HE STRUCK!

I THOUGHT I SAW SOMEONE... BUT I WAS WRONG.
I'LL GET A DOCTOR!
WHY? THE MAN IS DEAD!


FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, THE HOTEL PHYSICIAN CONFIRMED THIS STATEMENT...
I CAN.
...FRACTURED VERTEBRAE, SHATTERED SKULL.. BUT HE LOST VERY LITTLE BLOOD... I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT.


WHAT A TERRIBLE FATE, DON'T YOU AGREE?
I WOULD AGREE TO ANYTHING YOU SAY, COUNTESS. I AM ARASH! AL MIR. I PLAN TO GO TO THE CASINO. WILL YOU JOIN ME?

AT THE CASINO, I WATCHED SHEIK ARASHI AL MIR LOSE MILLIONS OF FRANCS WITHOUT BLINKING AN EYE...
YOU'VE LOST A GREAT DEAL, MY FRIEND DOESN'T IT DISTURB YOU ?
WHY SHOULD IT ? I HAVE UNLIMITED WEALTH.
BUT YOUR COUNTRYMEN ARE POOR. THEY...
THEY HAVE ALWAYS SUFFERED, BEAUTIFUL LADY. IT IS NOT FOR ME TO DISRUPT THEIR LIVES.
HE IS THE WEALTHIEST SHEIK WE'VE EVER HAD. HE'S LOST A FORTUNE, SIR. SHE IS THE COUNTESS VON A DDD... BEAUTIFUL, IS SHE NOT ?
LET US STROLL ON THE TERRACE, MY DEAR.
DO YOU FIND ME ATTRACTIVE, COUNTESS ?
INCREDIBLY SO, DEAR ARASHI AL MIR.
MMMMM...
7

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, I RETURNED TO THE CASINO...
THE SHEIK LEFT ME JUST OUTSIDE, MONSIEUR. DID HE RETURN YET? I DO NOT LIKE BEING SNUBBED BY ONE LIKE HIM!
NO, COUNTESS... ARASHI AL MIR S NOT HERE.
IT DISTRESSES ME TO INFORM YOU, EXCELLENCY, THAT YOUR FRIEND THE SHEIK, HAS DIED MYSTERIOUSLY. IF YOU WILL TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW...?
I KNOW TWO THINGS, MON CAPITAN...
...HE WAS NOT MY FRIEND NOR WAS HE A FRIEND TO ANY MAN. I DO NOT REGRET HIS PASSING!
THEN, MY ATTENTION STRAYED TO A DARK-HAIRED HANDSOME MAN WITH A THICK SHEAF OF MONEY... SPEAKING TO A PORTER, ONE OF THOSE UNNOTICED ATTENDANTS IN THE GREAT CASINO...
SOMEONE TOLD ME YOUR DAUGHTER NEEDS AN OPERATION, PIERRE HERE... GET IT DONE BY A GOOD DOCTOR!
PLEASE, SIR, I DID NOT ASK FOR MONEY. I WILL BE DISCHARGED IF...
YOU SEEM TO BE A VERY GENEROUS... AND A VERY RICH MAN, SIR!
IT'S EASY TO GIVE AWAY SOMEONE ELSE'S MONEY, HONEY... AND I WON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO SPEND IT ANYHOW!

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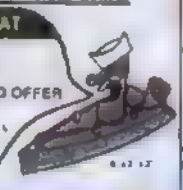

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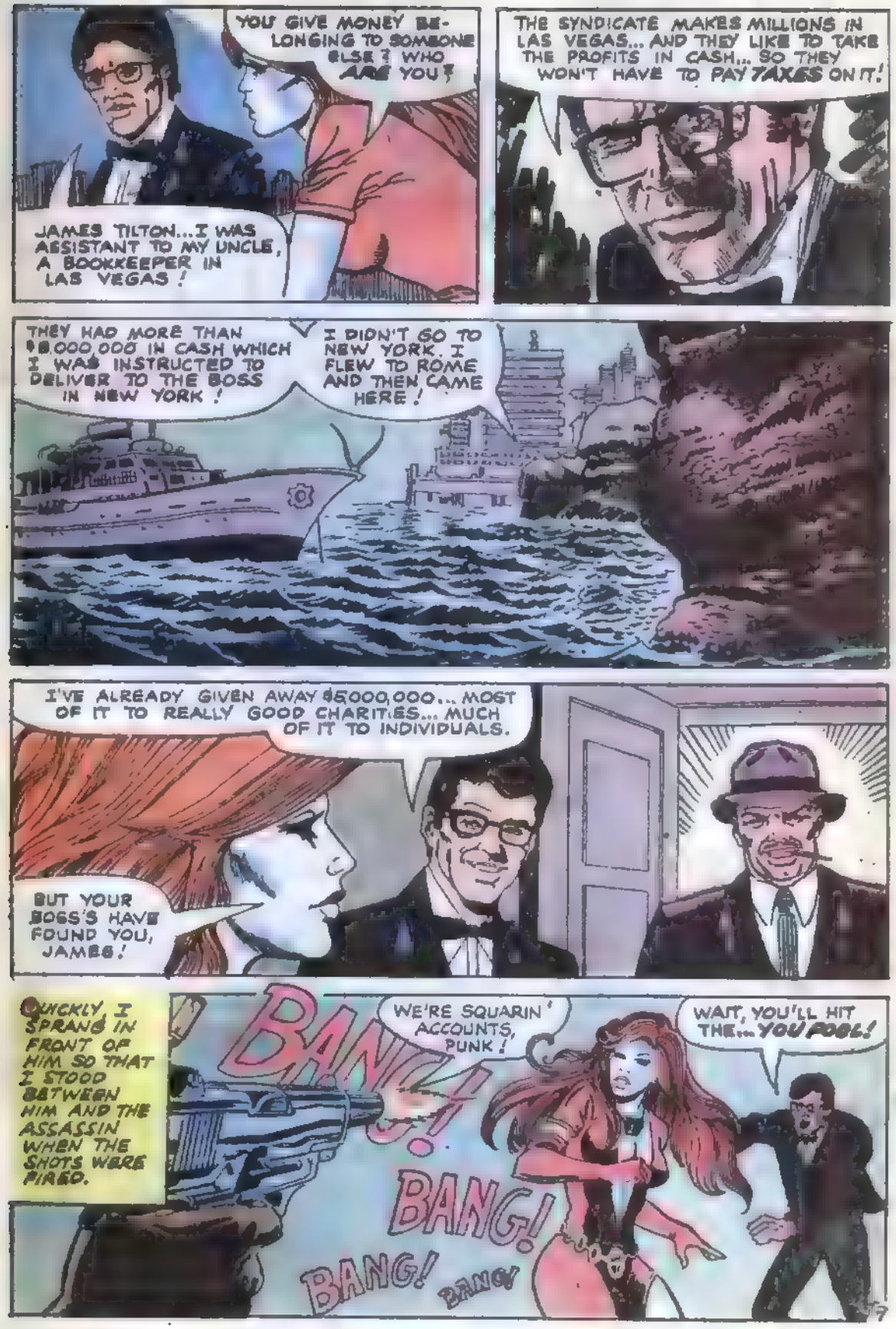
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BUT YOUR BOSS'S HAVE FOUND YOU, JAMES!
QUICKLY, I SPRANG IN FRONT OF HIM SO THAT I STOOD BETWEEN HIM AND THE ASSASSIN WHEN THE SHOTS WERE FIRED.
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
WE'RE SQUARIN' ACCOUNTS, PUNK!
WAIT, YOU'LL HIT THE... YOU FOOL!

DON'T TRY TO TALK! I...
DON'T WORRY, JAMES... I AM NOT HURT...
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WHAT HAPPENED TO THE POOR FELLOW, INSPECTOR?
I MUST RETURN HOME... PERHAPS I WILL RETURN SOME DAY.
BACK AT THE CASTLE VON BUDA I WAS LEFT WITH MANY PLEASANT MEMORIES BUT, ANYWAY, IT WAS GOOD TO BE HOME AGAIN...
GOOD NIGHT... WE SHALL MEET AGAIN.
TICTURN WAS UNDER SURVEILLANCE BUT HE CAME TO US AND SURRENDERED, CONFESSING TO THEFT FROM A CASINO IN LAS VEGAS. THE OWNERS HAVE NOT PREFERRED CHARGES!
THEY NEVER WILL, INSPECTOR NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME!
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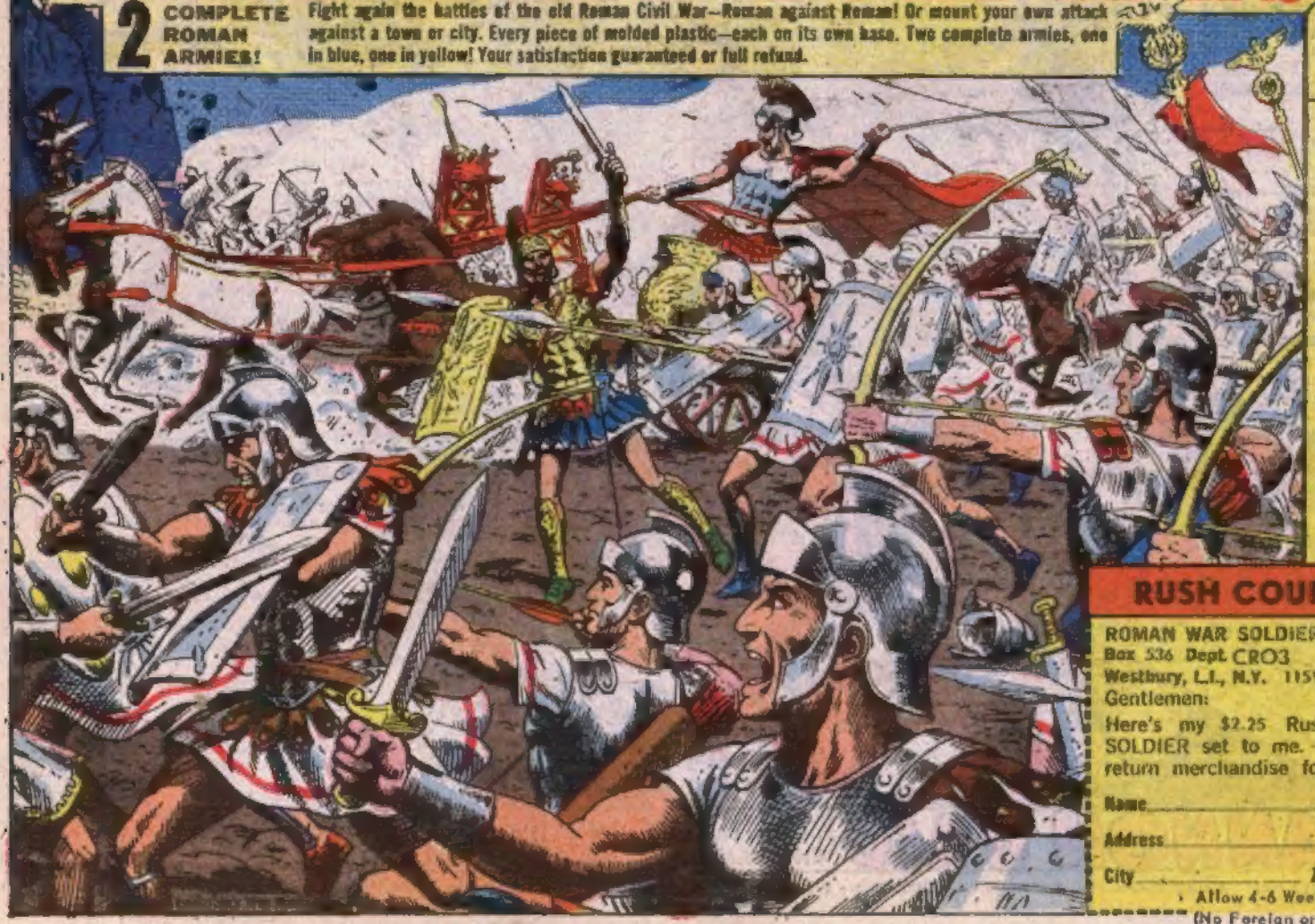

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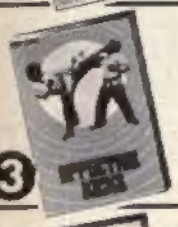

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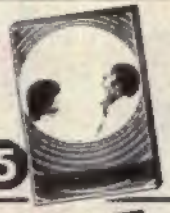

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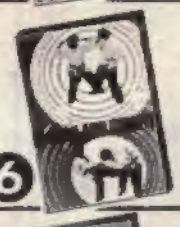

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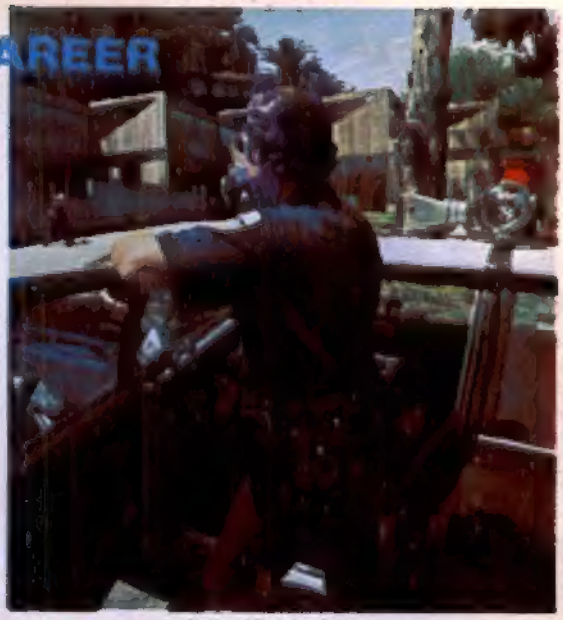

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